

Mask Performance and The Imaging Consciousness: The relationship between body and non-body in performance.

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COMPULSORY DECLARATION

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Abstract

This study employs Jean-Paul Sartre's theories of the 'analogon' and the imaging consciousness to develop the relationship between body and object in mask performance (Sartre, 1948:23). I suggest that the idea of the analogon allows for the body to be extended through, or invested into, objects to make new bodies (Shephard 2006: 150). These new bodies can possess multiple functions, when in relation to one another, one of which is to create metaphorical imagery which aids the development of story in the audience's imaging consciousness. The study proposes that the analogon has the ability to pull the audience's consciousness into a space that lies between the real and the fantastical, a space that can be defined as the imaginary. Furthermore, the study explores the idea that the combination of the imaging consciousness, the analogon and mask technique, through improvisational play, *via negativa* and transposition, can be utilized as a methodology towards developing the physical body as a mode of communication. This methodology extends the relationship between bodies and non-bodies (Shephard, 2006: 150) in mask performance, and uses this as a means of generating metaphorical images in order to make the imaginary world (which I refer to as story) come alive in the audience's imaging consciousness.

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Introduction

In this paper I will use Jean-Paul Sartre's theories of the 'analogon' and the 'imaging consciousness' to develop the relationship between body and object in mask performance (Sartre, 1948:23). The analogon is an object that stands in place of something that is absent and the imaging consciousness is essentially the relation between human consciousness and an object of perception in the act of forming images. I suggest that the idea of the analogon allows for the body to be extended through, or invested into, objects to make new bodies (Shephard, 2006:150). These new bodies can possess multiple functions, when in relation to one another, one of which is to create metaphorical imagery which, when patterned together, aids the development of story in the audience's imaging consciousness.

According to performance phenomenologist, Stanton Garner Jr, objects in their relationship to the body, which he refers to as the subject, have an effect on the body/subject. Simon Shephard explains that:

within the phenomenological account [there] are objects which retain their functionality, being simply equipment for the subject. But that account has also provided the basis for Garner's thumbnail sketch of the development of performance from a time when stage props were properties, to a time when they became de-functionalised and unsettling. It's an evolutionary history taking us to modern alienation. What that history occludes is the recurrence of various, but always cathected, body-object relations (2006:150).

In my experience, I have found that a stage prop, when identified as an analogon of an absent body, regains its functionality in accordance with the absent body it represents and the relationship between the object as analogon and the absent body it represents creates a

new body. This idea extends into mask performance in that the relationship between the performer (the body) and the mask (object) allows for a new body (the character) to emerge. Furthermore, the cathexis that occurs in the relationship between the masked character and these new bodies as functioning analogons, creates metaphorical images which provide information about the character and the world in the audience's imaging consciousness and transforms the form of a mask performance into a highly metaphorical landscape. My research developed from initial explorations of the body/mask relationship as an analogon that brought the absent character into being, to the combining of the body/mask analogon with scenography and other objects to create a new kind of analogon or in Shephard's terms, body/non-body relationship, that brings something new into being. In other words, the concept extends beyond the revelation of character into the revelation of story in the complex and multiply populated ecology of the performance space.

Harold Scheub, in his book *Story*, argues that African storytelling is the combination of image and emotion, of narrative movement, of form or patterning, and the layering of imagery that results in story and that story has always been used to provide connections between the past and the present (1998:13). He continues to say that story is a blurring, a coming together of signifier and signified to form an image: "not reality, not even an imitation of reality, but a new, novel world composed of images *derived* from and *partaking* in images in reality but *not* reality: this is fantasy" (1998:14, emphasis in original). In addition, in order for the tale, which I refer to as the story, to live, the image must sit in a space that lies between the real and the fantastical. And it is this space that I understand to be, the imaginary.

But how are imaginary objects/bodies perceived by the audience's consciousness? How can bodies be extended through, or invested into, objects to form new bodies in mask

performance? How do these new bodies interact and how do they influence one another? What happens when these interactions are patterned together and how is that perceived or understood by the audiences who observe them? Can Sartre's theories of the analogon and the imaging consciousness be a viable framework for understanding the generation of images that include both the real and the fantastical within mask performance? And can this be transposed into other genres of performance?

Sartre's 'Imaging Consciousness'

I will begin with Sartre's idea of the Imaging Consciousness. In one of his earlier texts, *The Psychology of Imagination* (1948), Sartre was concerned with how imaginary objects are understood by one's consciousness. He suggests that our consciousness is continuously balancing on a continuum between perception and imagination and that in order for imaginary objects to be seen, our consciousness must be pulled along this continuum toward the imaginative pole. But what is the difference between perception and imagination and how can this pull towards the imaginary be achieved?

Perception is the observation over time in the real world and is necessarily incomplete, whereas imagination, is total. William Keith Tims, in his dissertation *Masks and Sartre's 'Imaginary': Masked Performance and The Imaging Consciousness* (2007), uses the analogy of a piano to best realise Sartre's thoughts. He explains that if a piano stood in front of you, your perception would be that you only see one side of the piano. However, your imagination would see all sides, the strings, the sounds, even the memories and emotions that you relate to the piano. Furthermore, whatever object appears in the imagination we already have an intention, an expectation, idea or determination toward it. Our intention is our 'lens' through which we view that object. For example, "this is my piano" or "this is her

piano” (Tims, 2007: 4). Our intention, in this example, has led to a sense of ownership.

Sartre explains that:

[We] apprehend these objects as images, that is they lose their own meaning in acquiring another meaning. Instead of existing for themselves, in a free state, they become integrated into a new form. The intention serves only as a means for evoking its objects, just as table turning is used to call forth spirits. They serve as *representatives* of the absent object, without, however, in any way eliminating the characteristic of objects of an imaginary consciousness: namely, their absence.

(1948:26, emphasis in original)

He continues to say that the “image is an act which envisions an absent or non-existent object as a body, by means of physical or mental content which is present only as an ‘analogical representative’ of the object envisioned” (1948:26). Therefore, the world of the imaginary is established by objects given to our consciousness by a spontaneous synthetic act which unites knowledge and intention through the content of an analogon (Tims, 2007:6). In other words, when an analogon moves in a way that relates to knowledge with an intention behind it, it can cause the imagination to come to the foreground.

Furthermore, Tims explains that imaginary acts are a way to make present the concepts of thought (Tims, 2007:9). By citing Sartre, he identifies two kinds of thought: reflective thought and pre-reflective thought. Reflective thought is self-aware in that one is conscious when one is thinking. Pre-reflective thought is when one is not aware that one is thinking. This latter kind of thought allows for a kind of possession to occur. And both attitudes bring us the concept of the object of our thought (Tims, 2007:9). “The act of imagination” Sartre states, “is destined to make the object of one’s thought, the thing it

desires, appear in such a way that one can possess it” (in Tims, 2007:10). Sartre calls this, the ‘philosophy of transcendence’, and argues that it is our ability to imagine that gives us our freedom of consciousness. Tims explains that “a consciousness that could not imagine, would be hopelessly mired in the ‘real’, incapable of thought or choice” (Tims, 2007:12). Sartre goes on to say that the human condition is a state of complete freedom of existence and as existence precedes essence, humanity’s ‘essence’ is defined by the individual human being. It is this freedom that shapes the way we understand the world (Tims, 2007:12). Therefore, the philosophy of transcendence is where consciousness transcends itself in order to realise itself. It is part of the imaginative synthesis that we use to understand and make sense of the world. For Sartre,

...the imaginative act itself consists in positing the imaginary for itself, that is, in making that meaning explicit ... but this specific position of the imaginary will be accompanied by a collapsing of the world which is then no more than the negated foundation of the unreal. And if the negation is the unconditioned principle of all imagination, it itself can never be realized excepting in and by an act of imagination. That which is denied must be imagined. (1948:273)

Thus, Sartre’s theory of imagination, is based on the idea of freedom. Tims explains that our freedom comes from our ability to imagine and that our imagination is a tool by which we attempt to possess the absent. Following Sartre/Tims therefore, we can both perceive and imagine at the same time. Our perception gives us knowledge, and our imagination synthesizes that knowledge with our intentions to make the absent object real (Tims, 2007:188).

However, Sartre's theory suggests that in all imaginative consciousness there must be an analogon which facilitates the connecting of consciousness to the absent or imaginary object, and this has been the target for most criticism from theorists and academics in the field of phenomenology and its relationship to the imagination. French Philosopher, Paul Ricoeur, known for combining phenomenological description with hermeneutics¹, argues that Sartre's theory is based on a *paradigm of absence* which ultimately relies on an original pictorial presence (Clayton, 2011:17, emphasis in original). He continues to say that "Sartre...fail[s] to liberate the image from its bondage to the model or original of which it would be the picture or replica" [in Clayton, 2011:21] which is problematic when engaging with fiction and fantasy in that he questions the imaginative consciousness's ability to intend a non-existent object for which there could be no original presence or image to use as an analogon.

Furthermore, Irish philosopher, Richard Kearney, in, 'Paul Ricoeur and the Hermeneutic Imagination' (1988), argues in favour of Ricoeur who is concerned with Sartre's representational model of the image as a mere negation of perceptual reality. Kearney cites Ricoeur in his argument that images can no longer be adequately understood in terms of their immediate phenomenological appearance to consciousness and suggests that the visual model of the image be replaced by the verbal in order to achieve a more poetical role of imagining:

It is necessary firmly to distinguish imagination from image, if by image is understood a function of absence, the annulment of the real in an imaginary unreal. This image-representation, conceived on the portrait of the absent, is still

¹ A method or theory of interpretation.

too dependent on the thing that it makes unreal; it remains a process for making present to oneself the things of the world. A poetic image is much closer to a word than to a portrait. (Ricoeur, 1969: 10-11 cited in Kearney 1988:123)

Although Kearney acknowledges Sartre's attempt to establish the image as a dynamic act of consciousness rather than a quasi-perceptual thing *in* consciousness, he continues to affirm that both Sartre, and Edmund Husserl² before him, failed to grasp the fact that signification and imagination are not separate modes of intentionality but are intricately related (1988:123). According to Kearney, the "fault" of most philosophies of imagination has been "their failure to develop a properly hermeneutic account of imagining as an inherently symbolizing-metaphorizing-narrativizing activity". Kearney suggests that this symbolizing-metaphorizing-narrativizing activity is "the most basic structural feature of [Ricoeur's] *semantic innovation*" in which the imagination is understood as an essential agent in the creation of meaning in and through language (1988:118, emphasis in original). In other words, its ability to say one thing in terms of another, or to say several things at the same time, thus creating something new.

In addition, Kearney highlights Ricoeur's suggestion that "symbols are *image-words* which traverse and transcend *image-representations*" (Kearney, 1988:125, emphasis in original). Ricoeur, according to Kearney, suggests that the imagination is not simply a "*power of images*" (1988:125) to represent absent objects but that the visual images of dreams are sensory vehicles for verbal images which surpass them and adopt other meanings than the literal ones. Furthermore, the work of dream images provides evidence

² Edmund Husserl – a German philosopher who established the school of phenomenology. He elaborated critiques of historicism and of psychologism in logic based on analyses of intentionality. Husserl describes the act of imagining as a "neutralized" mode of seeing.

of the fact that the symbolic levels of sense are more complex and malleable than the traditional models of analogy and allegory would allow (1988:125).

In response to both Kearney and Ricoeur, I suggest that Sartre's theory of the analogon, when applied to mask performance, eliminates the idea that the analogon is merely a representational image void of symbolic levels of sense that eliminates fantasy. I suggest that extending Sartre's theory of the analogon beyond Tims's suggestion of the body/mask relationship into the entire scenography of a mask performance, allows for a more poetic way of imaging, or as both Kearney and Ricoeur argue, allows a more "symbolizing-metaphorizing-narrativizing activity" to occur. Furthermore, I suggest through a reflection on my own practice and through an examination of the work of companies such as FTH:K and Mummenschanz, that if one pays close attention to stretching the abstraction of the representational image or analogon, developing the 'sens' of the analogon in relation to the absent body it represents, and by exploring the relationship between multiple functioning analogons in the performance (not just the mask), a way of imaging occurs that relies on both the real and the fantasy. This supports the idea that Sartre's theory of the analogon is a fundamental tool towards not only accessing the imagination but also posits the imagination as a mode of consciousness that lies between the real and the fantasy, layered with complex meaning and emotion. Peter Stepan, in his book *Spirits Speak: A celebration of masks* (2005), suggests that masks are a source of ambivalence creating multiple layers of meaning that "are conceived as embodiments or representations of beings that are truly hybrid" (2005: 23) and this unleashes the viewer into the depths of the unconscious mind.

Moving forward, the following section uses full character mask as object and performer as body to work through Sartre's theory of the analogon and its ability to pull the

audience's consciousness towards a more imaginatively orientated attitude. Using the combination of performer and full character mask, I will expand on how the relationship between the mask and the performer allows for a new body, the character, to emerge in the audience's imaging consciousness.

The Mask as an *Analogon*

“the truth of one world is the illusion of the next” (Stepan, 2005:23)

In his dissertation, Tims suggests that Sartre's theory of imagination is best realised through mask performance. Here, 'mask' refers to a face covering that is used in performance intended to represent an 'other', someone else other than the person who is wearing it. My minor project, *The Mask and The Audience*, was an exploration of Tims's suggestion. It explored the audience's apprehension of mask performance in comparison to a performance without a mask. If we accept Sartre's belief that when an analogon moves in a manner that relates to knowledge with intention behind it, it can cause the imagination to come to the foreground, then we might accept that character identity within mask theory is less about psychological exploration and more about an imaginative synthesis through the animation of the analogue. The mask must therefore be animated, must be brought into motion in order to pull the audience into the imaginary.

As I mentioned before, Sartre states that our consciousness is made up of the perceptive consciousness (perception), and the consciousness that imagines (the imagination). The perceptive consciousness attends to the 'real', it is reflective and self-aware. It is about what exists in the world, and our perception is always incomplete. The imagination, on the other hand, is complete and pre-reflective. It lives in the realm of the

unreal in that it is absent, missing, non-existent. It is about 'being' and how we attempt to understand the nature of things we encounter in the world. It is an understanding that comes to us intuitively, spontaneously and pre-reflectively (Tims, 2007:188). Tims further suggests that "to 'be' is to have a 'completeness' which can only exist in the imagination" (Tims, 2007:188). According to Tims, following Sartre, one can do both perceiving and imagining at the same time and that in fact the two are constantly moving along this continuum (Tims, 2007:188. Sartre, 1948: 259-263).

A recurring theme within mask literature is that masks are tied to the imagination. Mask theatre practitioner, Toby Wilsher, in *The Mask Handbook*, reiterates that "the transforming power of the mask in the audience's imagination, the power of the imagination, the imaginative leap, the suspension of disbelief is at the heart of the theatrical experience" (2007:14). Imagine the continuum is a thin stick balancing horizontally on the top of a vertical pole. On one end hangs perception and on the other, imagination. Because the presence of the mask as a functional analogon invites the imaginary state, the continuum tilts more towards the imagination, the audience surrenders some perception and begins to imagine. In mask theory, it is called *suspension of disbelief* and it is essential for the success of the mask. Wilsher highlights that masks "require the audience to watch as they did when they were children, wide-eyed and believing, to suspend their disbelief, their adult sensibilities and their twenty-first century cynicism" (2007:7).

As a result, following Tims, I have identified four characteristics of the mask as a functioning analogon that pulls the audience towards the imaginary. The first characteristic is the functionality of the mask as an analogon. For Tims, Sartre believed that "movement constitutes the 'very stuff' of the object" (Tims, 2007: 7). Sartre explains that:

...in the consciousness which is clearly imaginary there is a zone of semi-darkness where almost imperceptible states, empty imaginative cognitions which are almost images, and symbolic apprehensions of movement appear and disappear rapidly. Let one of these cognitions fix itself for a moment on one of these movements, and the imaginative consciousness is born. (Sartre, 1948:119)

This is reiterated by Simon Murray with reference to the work of Jacques Lecoq who believed that the body and its movement through space was the crucial generator of meaning and significance (Murray, 2003:34). The audience's response to my performance of *The Mask and The Audience*, was that the mask shifted their gaze from the face of the unmasked actor in the first version to the body of the masked actor in the second version (Questionnaire from *The Mask and The Audience*, 2017); from trying to interpret the emotional journey of the unmasked performer to the immediacy of being pulled into the world and being *submerged in* the emotional journey of the masked performer at the same time. Here, there is no cause and effect. "The movement is not a result of the emotional state, but is part of the state itself. The 'very stuff', they come at the same time" (Tims, 2007:8). From the above quote, we see that the movement and the emotional state arrive at the same time. The actor uses her own knowledge to create the 'sens' (or the persona) of the mask through physicality (or movement). With the spectator's knowledge and intention, a spontaneous synthesis of the imagination in the consciousness of the audience occurs. The audience then reads themselves into the masked performance because their intentions and knowledge create (or make real) the characters. As Tims further clarifies, "we do not see the mask and respond. We respond to the animated mask: the mask and the actor together through the synthesis of the imaginary process" (Tims, 2007:178). Here, the relationship between object (the mask) and body (performer) becomes apparent in that

their relationship is not one sided as Garner suggests – the mask is not merely used to serve the performer nor is the performer used to serve the mask, but rather that the mask (object) and the performer (body) merge into one to form a new body – the character.

In *The Mask and The Audience*, the audience was deeply drawn towards the mask. In post-performance comments audience members noted that they felt the emotions of the masked performance to be more heightened than that of the unmasked performance, unveiling a sense of truth (Questionnaire from *The Mask and The Audience*, 2017). Gustavo Boada argues that masks are always in action, always suggesting something to the audience, including emotion (cited in Tims, 2007:179). But Sartre, in contrast, believes that the emotions do not come from the object but rather that they come from the imagination of the spectator. Tims explains that “the emotions ‘evoked’ through the mask come when an audience member reconstructs the character through the ‘sens’ expressed” (Tims, 2007:178).

According to Tims, the ‘sens’ of the mask is made up of two components: the abstraction in the mask’s construction and the actor’s performance (Tims, 2007). The actor, through movement, embodies the ‘sens’ of the analogon [the mask]. Through the spontaneous synthesis of the imagination which is fed by the audience’s knowledge and intention, the audience reconstructs the character of the analogon through the ‘sens’ expressed by the actor. It is in this reconstruction that the audience gives life to the mask. So, it is the ambiguous nature of the mask that invites the audience to imagine these ‘suggestions’ towards emotions but ultimately the ‘heightened’ sense of emotion that the audience experiences is informed by their own knowledge, their own experience. The emotions feel more heightened, more believable, in a sense truer to the individual spectator because they are rooted in the spectator’s own experience. The audience participates in a

collective process in the performance by reading their intentions towards the analogon into the characterization presented by the actor. In mask theory, this synthesis of the audience's intentions with the mask and movements of the actor to make present the character, is underpinned by the 'inner monologue'. The inner monologue, Wilsher says is when "the audience read[s] the movement by adding their own commentary, filling in the thought process with their own words. So, they are listening to their own voice, their own vocabulary, based on their own experience of life" (Wilsher, 2007:7).

The second characteristic of the mask as analogon, is the 'Index of Identity'. According to renowned mask designer, W.T. Benda, faces are indicators of personality, emotion and nature (Benda, 1944:2). Because the mask abstracts the face, the spectator is not given the same level of information as with a real face. And it is this abstraction that invites the imagination to fill in the gaps. Benda further explains that when a well-animated mask captures the 'sens' of the personage represented, the audience is drawn to the face to try and determine the identity of the person appearing before them. As Tims affirms, masks carry suggestions of identity and emotion in more immediate ways than performers without masks, because such suggestions of identity and emotion are fundamentally imaginary in nature (Tims, 2007:190). This was evident in the audience's responses to *The Mask and The Audience*, as they stated that their eye was immediately drawn to the face of the mask and then to the action of the performer's body (Questionnaire from *The Mask and The Audience*, 2017).

The third characteristic is 'the pull into the imagination'. In, *The Mask and The Audience*, a spectator mentioned that there were moments where he swore he saw the expression of the mask physically change (Questionnaire from *The Mask and The Audience*, 2017). These miraculous transformations of the mask are a result of a more imaginary state

of apprehension in the audience. Therefore, the stronger the pull into the imagination, the more alive the animated mask becomes which enables the mask to seem to change expression. This is achieved by the precision of the performer's choices when physicalizing the essence (or persona) of a well-made mask. But we must accept, according to Tims's understanding of Sartre, that while the choices the masked actor makes affect the imaginary synthesis, ultimately the imaginary synthesis belongs to the consciousness of the individual member of the audience (Tims, 2007:199).

Just as the mask seemed to have changed expression during the performance, so did the performance space itself according to a few spectators. This leads us to the fourth and final characteristic, 'the power of the mask', which is the mask's ability to project or enclose space when the persona of the mask is made present through the analogon. Tims cites Ron J. Popenhagen who calls masks "instruments of imagination" in that "a mask exists outside the limitations of its own physical form; its essence is in the space and not in its solid, tangible form" (cited in Tims, 2007:202-3). In addition, because the mask redirects the performer's expression from the face to the body, the spectator's gaze on the masked performer broadens.

Although, according to the audience response survey conducted after the minor project, the mask as a functioning analogon was successful in the performance of *The Mask and The Audience*, I cannot ignore the fact that the performance was only five minutes long. This begged the question, could the mask be sustained for an extended period of time while maintaining the audience's interest and at the same time attempt to engage with an intended subject matter within a performance? And what aesthetic devices would be needed to achieve this? Applying the characteristics explored above to my medium project, *The Rabble*, was an attempt to develop the body/mask combination in relation to a highly

designed set within an extended performance. I will continue by analysing the process of my medium project and my application of the characteristics of a functioning analogon to the body/mask combination using exercises in mask technique derived from Eldredge (1996), Lecoq (2002), Wilsher (2007) and Wright (2017).

The Mask in Performance

The Rabble was first conceptualised for The Heritage Festival at the Artscape Theatre in Cape Town in 2016 and further developed and reimaged at Magnet Theatre in 2017 as my medium project. It was created by myself and fellow theatre-maker, Richard September, to experiment with mask performance and to create a story that was both visually captivating and that engaged with the imaginary and the grotesque. It also challenged us to sustain the mask over the extended duration of a full production. Before I expand on the aesthetic devices employed in both the making and the performance of *The Rabble*, I will contextualise the concept which will provide insight into the objects (masks, props, set, sound and lights) and their intended indexes of identity.

In trying to situate the play we drew inspiration from the open plots of land on the eastern fringe of Cape Town's CBD, the area formerly known as District Six, now Zonnebloem. A common site in this part of the city is the makeshift shelters constructed by homeless people hidden in and amongst the tall grass, abandoned excavation sites and underground tunnels. This largely overlooked landscape, presented to us a grey area in the city's collective consciousness. Having engaged with a few individuals who live within this grey area, we were inspired to recreate some of the dreams, fears and uncertainties experienced by them. The challenge for us was giving value to the mundane human experience whilst heightening the realm of dreams and fears as experienced in this

undefined zone, that itself is historically loaded with the injustice of forced removals under apartheid.

Benda's idea of the index of identity in mask-making was important in the construction of the masks because in order for the masks to be successful analogons, their construction had to allow for transformation without becoming fixed in the expression. This makes it possible to manifest complex feelings. From photographic references of portraits of people who inhabited the streets of district six before and after the forced removals, and from interviews conducted with a few who inhabit the land today, what became apparent was that their faces wore/wear their hardship - weathered, engraved, bruised and swollen. Seeping through their hardened exterior, their emotions are weighted, their vulnerability exposed while simultaneously being hopeful for opportunity and happiness. It was important for us to capture the essence and complexity of these people and their hardship in the construction of the masks. This was reiterated by an audience member who expressed in a post-performance discussion that when she was "watching their faces, [she] felt something captured about these two people and who they are in the world and that these people in the world have those faces" (Voice recording: Q&A from *The Rabble*, 2017).

In accordance with Sartre's theory of the analogon, Sears Eldredge in *Mask Improvisation for Actor Training and Performance* describes the mask as "an agent of transformation of the presence of an other" (1996:41). But in order for the other to emerge in the audience's imaging consciousness, we had to embody the essence and complexity of the constructed masks using a heightened physicality that matched the stylistic abstraction of the masks. Eldredge insists that, "if the mask is to live and breathe, it must live and breathe in and through the wearer's *bodymind*, its face must become her face, its body must become her body" (1996:41, emphasis in original). In the project we used exercises in

mask technique derived from Eldredge (1996), Lecoq (2002), Wilsher (2007) and Wright (2017) to prepare the body for the mask and to develop the relationship between the object (the mask) and the body.

However, we did not start from an uninformed body or an untrained body. It is important to mention here that both September and I studied under Jennie Reznick (actress, teacher, director and a founding member of Magnet Theatre) at the University of Cape Town's Drama School (2008-2011) which has informed and heavily influenced our practice as physical theatre performers and theatre-makers over the last decade. Reznick's pedagogy, which is influenced by her time studying at École Jacques Lecoq in Paris (1984-6), is primarily concerned with the moving body of the individual within the political and social context of South Africa itself. The groundwork of Reznick's teaching follows Lecoq's trajectory of working first with the elements – air, fire, water, earth – and then with animals, matter, objects and colours as impulses for transformation. Like Lecoq, she advocates, "that in all, the external world ultimately becomes the teacher, and the student/performer makes a significant shift to learn from the external world, rather than to engage with it in a relationship of usage" (Reznick, 2016:157). My experience of transformation, both as a student and as a professional, is that it relies on improvisation and play as the driving tools for generating and embodying story through the actor's ability to morph into objects/matter other than human by adopting the characteristics (the 'sens') of the intended object/person. This allows the actor to traverse between animate and inanimate objects to form images that come alive in the audience's imagination. Reznick argues that "transformation requires an understanding of play" and that:

improvisation...is embedded in a practice that is designed to reveal the specificity of identity and subjectivity as expressed through the action of play. Play is the

antidote for the mechanical and fascist body. It is what allows forms and ideas to change and transform. (Reznek, 2016:157)

It was with this embodied knowledge as our foundation, that we began to explore Lecoq's belief that "to enter into a mask means to feel what gave birth to it, to rediscover the basis of the mask and to find what makes it vibrate" (Lecoq, 2002:57). We used Lecoq's 'via negativa' (Murray, 2003:49; Wilsher, 2007:29) as a way of working in mask in order to identify the limitations of the mask and to find the positive and most effective things it can do. *Via Negativa*, which stems from Jerzey Grotowski, is an approach which rejects prescription and illustration and rather employs negation as a mode of searching for truth. In other words, it is a continuous proposing of possibilities until the most effective is accepted. Thus, through improvisation and play we developed and defined the characters' identities, their characteristics and modes of communication through the use of gestural lines (the idea that gestures placed at certain levels carry subliminal meanings); developed each character's countermask (playing an attitude or emotion counter to the one expressed on the mask which is less about technicalities and more about playing the emotional truth); used tension and energy as a tool towards developing relationship; as well as speed and rhythm of movement in order to deduce status, intent, character and points of concentration. This established the basic structure or language which allowed us to play the character. Although the construction of the masks leaned towards full character mask, the masks did reveal the performers' mouths. Therefore, it was necessary for us to explore the vocal gestures of the body/mask combination. Due to Afrikaans being the dominant language of communication used by the people we chose to reference, the voices of the characters, discovered through improvisational play, resulted in an abstraction of the guttural sounds found within the vocal gestures of the language itself. However, finding the

characters' voices posed a challenge when working with the body in that the more we played vocally, the less we engaged the body as a mode of communication. With our interest being in trying to give value to the mundane human experience we began playing with situational improvisation and started introducing props in order to signify the inner workings of the minds of the characters to establish how the people that we were indexing exist within the world. Because September and I were both the creators and the performers, this process was difficult and often unsuccessful due to a well-known fact in mask theory that the mask requires an outside eye, the observer, to accept the transformation and to give feedback as to its effectiveness (Wilsher, 2007:45). This resulted in a reliance on video recording, viewing and reflecting after every improvisation which made the process long and tedious. However, we found that the more intertwined our bodies and the masks became, the more articulate the personages of the characters were. Lecoq explains that "the mask becomes a sort of vehicle, drawing the whole body into an expressive use of space, determining the particular movement which make[s] the character appear" (2002:59).

In addition, our concern with the mundane produced a performance that translated as a heightened realism. We were not exploring the realm of dreams and fears that the mask naturally encourages because we were not considering the other objects in the space – a key component of the work that I feel could have been detected earlier had we had the observer in the rehearsal process. However, by widening our gaze off the body/mask combination and onto the objects in the space, we discovered through the process that the masks as functioning analogons did not operate in isolation from the other objects in the space. The other objects (the props, set, sound and light) in themselves, and the characters'

relationship to/with them, created a new kind of analogon in relation to, but distinct from, the new body created through the combination of the mask and the performer.

With reference to my medium project *The Rabble* (2017) described above, and the work of FTH:K under the direction of Rob Murray, the next section will explore the extension of the analogon (the new body) beyond the body/mask combination in order to determine what emerges from the relationship between the body/mask combination and the scenography.

Scenography and *Analogons* in Masked Performance – *The Rabble*, Rob Murray and FTH:K

Sears, A. Eldredge advocates that any stylistic choices in stage design must harmonize with and compliment the style of the mask, they must both be able to inhabit the same space (Eldredge, 1996:161). With this understanding and in collaboration with artist Francois Knoetze, we designed a set using discarded materials that were repurposed. This consisted of a geometric aerial structure of Table Mountain suspended behind vertical aluminium shafts, a raised mound constructed from remoulded plastic to depict a makeshift shelter built around an underground tunnel, miniature houses which stood upon the mound to depict District Six before the forced removals, a street lamp and a dump compiled of discarded metal scraps. Although we intended the set to compliment the heightened quality of the masks, what we discovered was that the abstraction of the designed set pulled the audience's consciousness into a more imaginatively orientated attitude because it embodied the essence of the landscape which opened up the world within the audience's imaging consciousness. Furthermore, the soundscape simultaneously invited the imaginary through the synthesising of sounds which exist in the world. Discarded objects and debris were approached as musical objects and used compositionally to lend a greater sense of

context. Therefore, the individual set pieces and the soundscape became analogons of location. A member of the audience in a post-show discussion expressed that:

[the sound] is not formless, there are moments where the texture coincides with a specific rhythmic structure, at other points its quite fluid and that also takes me on an imaginative journey ... and the resonance of an actual landscape, the materials used calls for detritus, therefore I am thinking of the space that its indexing in relation to what remains. (Voice recording: Q&A from *The Rabble*, 2017)

Unlike *The Rabble*, FTH:K's production of *Quack* (2009) directed by Rob Murray, uses full mask and utilitarian masks³ to differentiate between the character's actual world - which I refer to as his primary world - and the world of the protagonist's consciousness - which I refer to as the secondary world. Both worlds use the same abstract physical language that immediately pulls the audience towards a heightened realm of performance. Murray employs objects both practically and as portals into alternative worlds and emotional states. The play opens with a man covered in a white sheet lying on what is perceived as a gurney. Doctors wearing medical facemasks carrying a heart monitor, move around him in a montage comprised of abstract mimetic movements drawn from our knowledge of the world. As the doctors break into a slow-motion fight sequence over who's prognosis is correct, the man emerges from under the sheet wearing full mask. He observes a miniature set move towards him and as he picks it up, the lights fade and a life size replica of the miniature set moves forward. The miniature set acts as a portal into the man's consciousness.

³ Masks found in the everyday for practical purposes, for example a medical mask or gas mask.

Objects effectively add to the power of the mask performance in that they provide insight into the character's emotional state and intention by virtue of the characters' engagement/interaction with objects. According to Lecoq, the eyes, which are important for an unmasked performer in the psychological playing, are replaced, in a performance with a mask, by the head and the hands, which assume great significance (Lecoq, 2002). Although some objects (referring to props) in *The Rabble* retained their intended functionality, like the metal cups the characters used for drinking and the pliers to extract their teeth, one could argue that they too were analogons of poverty and the poor's lack of accessibility to health care. However, the objects here are not representing absent bodies but rather serve as indicators of their circumstance. A few objects were consciously chosen as analogons. The use of a radio in *The Rabble* for example was an analogon of our current society, a society that scholar Ziauddin Sardar describes as having abandoned anyone who has fallen at the curb and held them responsible for their own failure as human beings (2010). By playing radio interviews that depict our society's opinions with regards to land reclamation and restitution, the radio functioned as society's rejection of the homeless people who currently inhabit the discarded land that was once District Six. The radio (object) and the society (body) it represented formed a new body that was able to communicate with and manipulate the characters pulling them into different emotional states such as hope, fear, joy and nostalgia.

Furthermore, when the characters interacted with or manipulated these new analogons, they no longer just represented an absent body but that body came alive not only in the audience's consciousness but also in the world of the play. This not only revealed the characters' emotional attitude towards the specific object but pulled the characters out of the mundane and into an alternative dream-like world – that I suggest is fantasy. *The*

Rabble opens with a woman carefully packing away tiny houses into a suitcase which is held by her husband. He closes the suitcase, places it on his head and departs, depicting the destruction of District Six. Later, the suitcase (manipulated by the woman) emerges and pulls the man into a nightmare reflecting the painful remnants of the past and the burden he carries. Therefore, objects as analogons not only have the ability to change function but their function can pull the characters into alternative worlds and reveal the characters' internal emotional struggle with the absent body that the analogon represents.

This is also seen in *Quack* when a masked character enters cradling a suitcase. He forbids the other characters from looking inside by hiding and moving it around the stage. This is revealed through physical montages highlighting his protective nature over his suitcase. Later, he opens it to reveal a house with a garden and two miniature puppets who resemble himself and the woman he loves. The suitcase is an analogon for his dreams and future and his interaction with the suitcase provides insight into his relationship with that dream. However, I found that the story of *Quack* lay on two distinct plains. On the one hand it was didactic and on the other it was confusing and nonsensical and I found myself disconnecting, my consciousness moving away from the imaginary towards perception as I tried to piece the story together. What would have happened had the event in the character's primary world influenced the objects chosen in the character's secondary world? If every object was a functioning analogon from the primary world, and had an impact when it engaged with the body/mask analogon in the secondary world, I believe that not only would the relationship between the body/mask combination and the objects be considered, but that the new considered relationship would tie the two worlds together. It would also aid in our understanding of, and our emotional connection to, the character's demise in the primary world whilst paralleling his desperation to hold onto life in the secondary world.

In addition, I found during my process that certain objects acted as secondary analogons in that they stood in place of an existing analogon, providing the history of that analogon which aided its capacity to evoke dream-like worlds. In *The Rabble*, in an image of the past, the woman cradles a blue blanket. Distraught, she abandons the 'baby' at a stranger's doorstep but before she leaves she removes a pair of blue baby shoes. Here, the blanket is the analogon for her baby in the past moment and the baby shoes become the analogon for the baby in the present moment, the memory of abandonment and the emotion experienced. Therefore, the shoes become a functioning analogon for the actor, as though the actor is experiencing the functioning analogon within her own imaging consciousness at the same time that the audience is.

Murray in his production, *Pictures of You* (2008), performed in full character mask, uses multiple analogons to stand in place of one body. The body/mask combination, a puppet and a painting all stand as analogons for the wife, Janet. Each analogon has a different function and its relationship with the character of the husband, Frank, not only provides insight into the essence of Janet by contextualizing their relationship in the past, but also exposes Frank's grief, his fears and avoidance in confronting the trauma of losing his wife. The images produced in *Pictures of You* were more successful because every object, in my opinion, acted as a functioning analogon. Furthermore, the objects used embodied the characteristics of the absent bodies they represented which then informed the relationship between the objects and the body/mask combination of both Frank and Janet. The analogons used in *Pictures of You* were able to locate, to change worlds, to evoke memory, to provoke emotion, to provide context and to ignite the character's imaging consciousness pulling him into dream states which allows for fantasy images to exist.

As a result of my experience in my own work and my examination of the works of FTH:K, I discovered that the relationship between the body/mask combination as a new body in Shephard's terms, and other objects in the performance, produces a layering of images. In turn, the layering of these images takes the audience into an experience of metaphor. With regard to Southern African oral storytelling, Scheub describes the metaphor as the inner realm of story and the aesthetic experience where the message is generated (1998:15). He explains that both realistic and fantasy images are involved in the performance of story, and that these images are organized into two forms, linear plotting and rhythmical reorganization. The effect of the latter is trope, a form of organizing emotion (1998:17). Similarly, I would suggest that, in *The Rabble*, it is the layering of both real and fantasy images that produces metaphor through the combination of analogons. Because the analogon allows the audience to read themselves into the performance, we are caught up in the images emotionally. Scheub suggests that we "become a part of the transformation that brings unlike images into metaphorical connection, and thereby become imbued with, indeed a part of, meaning" (1998:27). In my view, this parallels Sartre's theory of transcendence. For Scheub, "metaphor...organises the images of the real that they become worked into forms that restate and reorganize our experience of the real" (1998:24). Like Ricoeur and Kearney, Scheub believes that fantasy is the engine of change. However, he affirms that fantasy is not "strange" and "other", but rather that it is something extraordinary that emerges from our knowledge of the world, and helps to make sense of the real (1998:24). Furthermore, the fantasy images produced in *The Rabble*, images that Ricoeur and Kearney would argue are inaccessible through Sartre's theory of the analogon, were in fact achieved through the abstraction of the index of identity of the analogons (masks), their interaction and relationship to one another to form images - both in the real

and in the fantastical, and the layering/patterning of these images to produce a metaphorical landscape that in itself elicits emotion and meaning in the audience's imaging consciousness.

This is best realised in Murray's production of *Womb Tide* (2010) where I found myself to be more emotionally invested in the imagery produced. Although the production was a physical theatre performance performed without mask, the performers embody the same heightened physicality employed in mask performance. It is important to mention here that I am not interested in the body/mask combination but rather in the abstraction of the index of identity of the props used in an attempt to move away from analogons being replicas for the real but rather to focus on the abstraction of the index of identity of analogons as a means of tending the image towards the realm of fantasy. In *Womb Tide*, performer, Liezl De Kock, pulls a white balloon out of her mouth and together with fellow performer, Daniel Buckland, they take turns blowing the balloon up. The rhythm speeds up as the intervals between the two lessen depicting their excitement for what is perceived as a pregnancy. De Kock pegs the hole of the balloon and Buckland places the balloon under her dress. Later, she begins to feel a contraction at the same time that Buckland is whisking eggs in a frying pan. Here, Murray introduces a secondary analogon for the unborn child – the eggs. As the contractions build, the raw eggs fall from the pan, the balloon emerges from under the skirt and begins to deflate. The actors try to blow air into the balloon adopting the same rhythm as before but this time the level of tension in handling the balloon is different, embodying desperation instead of excitement. Murray uses two analogons for the same body (the unborn child) but each analogon embodied a different function. The balloon represented life and the raw runny eggs - death. Although the index of identity for both analogons were not direct representations, the essence they embodied

were the same as the absent bodies they represented and the way in which the actors interacted with the objects not only made the absent body that the analogons were indexing come alive in the audience's imaging consciousness, but the use of rhythm and pattern generated emotion that then provoked a visceral response in the audience.

However, if we refer back to *The Rabble*, putting the mask into a highly designed theatrical landscape introduced a whole lot of complexity, in that competing analogons were produced. Some objects unconsciously transformed or morphed into functioning analogons through the layering of other elements. The geometric aerial structure of Table Mountain suspended behind vertical aluminium shafts when layered with lighting and the force from the hazer which subtly manipulated the aluminium shafts, animated the cityscape evoking the thriving metropolis and the unattainable wealth of the privileged minority that it represents. We assumed that by placing the cityscape upstage that it would adopt a suggestive static role. Instead this new body gradually gained status, power and momentum encroaching upon the characters and engulfing the space. Because the cityscape was not identified as a functioning analogon, the relationship between the cityscape and the characters was not considered and therefore not fully realised.

Therefore, in masked performance, objects either retain their intended function or stand in place of absent bodies and thus become analogons and through manipulation or a layering of other elements, they form new bodies. In addition, these new bodies have the ability to locate, to change worlds, to evoke memory, to provoke emotion, to provide context and to ignite the actor's imaging consciousness. Furthermore, the relationship between the body/mask combination and these new bodies transforms the aesthetics of the scenography and the form into a highly visual metaphorical landscape through a

layering of images, rooted in emotion, which produces story in the imaging consciousness of the audience.

However, I have come to determine that these new bodies, when in relation to other new bodies, have the ability to pull the characters outside of the world of the play into alternative dream-like spaces which are evoked through the emergence of metaphorical imagery. And according to Ricoeur, fiction and fantasy lives within symbol and metaphor. We can therefore deduce that the audience's consciousness is able to lend itself towards fiction and fantasy when functioning analogons engage with one another. But can fiction and fantasy extend beyond the relationship between two or more analogons and into an individual analogon in and of itself?

Mummenschanz and the road towards Fantasy

Sartre suggests that it is the abstraction of the index of identity of the *analogon* that invites the consciousness towards an imaginative state, however the examples he employs to realize his thoughts could be seen as replicas or representations that sit too close to the real, as Ricoeur and Kearney both argue. But what Ricoeur and Kearney do not consider is Sartre's emphasis on motion - that when an analogon moves in a manner that relates to the 'sens' of the absent body the analogon represents, a spontaneous synthetic act occurs in the audience's imagination which makes the absent body real in the audience's imaging consciousness. Remember, Kearney argues that the image-representation which is based on the absent is too dependent on the thing that it makes unreal. He further argues that the application of the analogon remains a process for making present to oneself the things of the world, which refutes fiction and fantasy. In response to Kearney, I suggest, by analysing the work of Mummenschanz, that new bodies in mask performance created by the

combination of performer and object can exist in the plane of fiction and fantasy – namely the fictional body. I have previously established that the plane of fiction and fantasy is achieved through metaphor - a method that relies on the relationship between two or more functioning analogons, however this does not include a singular analogon in isolation as a new fictional body in and of itself. In accordance with the ideology of Ricoeur and Kearney, if a fictional body does not exist in the real, then fictional bodies would not come alive in the audience's imaging consciousness because there would be no absent body that exists for the performer to develop the essence ('sens') from. But I suggest that this is not the case because in agreement with Sartre, the language used to communicate the 'sens', however unique, can *only* be founded on the performer's knowledge of the world.

This is evident in the work of Mummenschanz Theatre Company⁴, created and founded by Bernie Schürch, Floriana Frassetto and Andres Bossard. Mummenschanz depend on the performer's knowledge of the world in order to identify and reveal certain 'universal truths' through their manipulation and animation of objects. This is reminiscent of the larval masks⁵ that Lecoq introduced in actor training to allow the actor to explore the territory between the neutral mask and the psychologically complicated character mask. According to Lecoq, the larval mask introduces the realm of fantasy in that they represent semi-formed beings that are naïve, curious and vulnerable. The intention of Mummenschanz is to inject an emotional charge into the space created between the performers, materials and their audience (Murray, 2003:116-117). Mummenschanz invests in materials that exist in the everyday and relies on the abstraction of these materials by engaging in a devising process that is based on play in order to find the basic language, the essence of the

⁴ See www.mummeschanz.com for all references to performances cited here.

⁵ Larval Masks (Basel masks), inspired by the carnival masks in Basel, Switzerland.

mask/puppet. With regards to the fictional body, when the performer is faced with an abstract object that appears to have no absent body from which to develop the 'sens', the performer then relies on her individual human experience to develop the basic language of a fictional analogon.

This is evident in the work of Mummenschanz in their exploration of the dimensions of animality and fantasy through the manipulation of different materials and objects in order to achieve the basic feelings and emotions which are understood worldwide without a reliance on words. In one of their performances, a giant white cloth enters, manipulated by a performer who forms creases in the material to reveal what could be interpreted as two brows, a nose and a mouth. The performer and the white cloth merge to form a new body, *The Face*. Using rhythm, pattern and facial gesture the body/cloth combination embodies the essence of being distraught. The body/cloth combination adopts the same breath patterns as a human would if they were distraught which is then accompanied by the body bent over as it sinks towards the floor. Although the abstraction of the object (the cloth) is far removed from a human face, the essence produced by the performer's engagement with the cloth produces facial expressions and breath patterns drawn from a felt human experience. The audience recognizes themselves in the analogon and therefore makes the fictional body (body/cloth combination) alive in their imaging consciousness.

In another of their performances, Mummenschanz creates a montage between two mask characters. The Masks are constructed using three toilet rolls – known as the 'toilet-paper-face'. The abstraction in the construction of the toilet-paper-face mask and the way the mask changes in proportion as the toilet paper is pulled from both masks pulls the audience's consciousness towards fantasy. The performance explores the emotional turbulence that exists within relationships through a series of interactions based on

childhood games. The most common game “he loves me, he loves me not” is depicted through one of the masked characters receiving a bunch of (toilet paper) flowers and plucking each segment alternating between two emotional states (joy and anger) using effort actions. The audience bursts into laughter as they relate to the game through their experience and the embodied emotions. This is also seen when one character pulls a continuous strand of toilet paper from the other mask and begins to read it. The action of the sequence shows the character receiving and reading a love letter from the character it has pulled the toilet paper from. The physical language of the body/toilet-paper-face characters is developed through situational play and derives physical movements from their emotional attitudes towards each other in relation to the situation that they find themselves in. The situations are derived from human experiences.

The imaginative synthesis that occurs in the audiences’ imaging consciousness that makes the characters real is based on a common felt experience that comes from the audience’s knowledge through their engagement of the real. This is best depicted in Mummenschanz’s performance of ‘the blob’ where a performer is placed inside an enclosed material covering that depicts an abstract mound referred to as ‘the blob’. The body/blob combination enters the performance space and begins to gently expand and contract. The subtle movement depicts the body/blob breathing which could be seen as a basic human action that suggests life. As the body/blob explores the performance space, it comes across a platform, and proceeds to climb onto it. It struggles constantly losing balance as it grapples with its own size and weight. The body/blob comes alive in the audience’s imaging consciousness the moment the body/blob combination breathes. As it struggles to climb onto the platform, failing with every attempt, the audience recognizes the intention of the body/blob combination. Drawing on their experience, they invest emotionally into the

scenario and cheer for the blob to succeed. The abstract body/object combinations that Mummenschanz create are fictional analogons that elicit emotion through embodying the 'sens' of human beings. Therefore, fiction and fantasy cannot exist completely without being influenced by human experience.

At this point, we have come to understand that Sartre's analogon is the extension of an absent body through an object to form a new body and that in order for the new body to come alive in the audience's imaging consciousness, it must include the following components: abstraction, index of identity and an embodied 'sens', all of which is influenced by a knowledge of the world. These new bodies can possess multiple functions when in relation to other bodies which produce images. Depending on the abstraction of the absent body and the abstraction of the analogon that represents it, these images either lean towards the real or towards fantasy. Fantasy analogons are capable of eliciting abstract ideas such as emotion within the audiences who observe them. When these images both real and fantasy are layered and patterned together they produce a metaphorical landscape, which is story, capable of opening up the world in the audience's imaging consciousness.

Moving forward, I propose Sartre's imaging consciousness and the analogon as a methodology that can be applied beyond mask performance and into other genres as a way of generating emotive metaphorical imagery that lends itself to the imaginary (which I refer to as story) in the making of stage performance?

Transposition

Jacques Lecoq, in his book, *The Moving Body* (2002), states that "...all theatre profits from the experience an actor gains through masked performance. This is an example of teaching

which does not operate directly, but through a ricochet effect” (2002:54-5). Lecoq refers to this ‘ricochet effect’ as *transposition*. He believes that the traces of mask work remain inscribed in each actor like “circuits laid down in the body, through which dramatic emotions also circulate, finding their pathway to expression” and that these “experiences, ranging from silence and immobility to maximum movement, taking in innumerable intermediate dynamic stages, will remain forever engraved in the body of the actor” (Lecoq, 2002:45).

If we accept Lecoq’s theory of transposition, that the body, over time, will retain and begin transposing technique into other genres of performance, then the transposition that results from working with masks should produce some sort of heightened metaphorical landscape in the making of new work (for both the actor and theatre-maker) even when the mask is not present. In the construction of my solo show a heightened metaphorical language emerged through the text. After deconstructing my process, I believe that the text was a direct result of an unconscious transposition of working with analogons.

To elaborate on the process, I began by documenting personal memories. From the memories I identified recurring objects and themes that were deeply rooted in a context that was both relevant and personal. I looked at what each object represented and what my relationship to that object was in relation to the context and themes that emerged and began free writing. This resulted in a text that was metaphorical, poetic, political and descriptively image-based. The text located the audience, changed worlds, evoked memory, provoked emotion and provided context. This resulted in the text as an analogon for the world in the audience’s imaging consciousness. In addition, the body in performance adopted a heightened performance energy that moved beyond a realistic depiction despite me not wearing a mask. I suggest that my previous work with mask led the body without the

mask to adopt a similar sense of time and space in that movements were indicated by shifts in breath and rhythm. Transitions took time to establish the different character bodies and their intended worlds. Shephard suggests the actor as cyborg⁶ because the actor carries the idea of extension and investment beyond the capacities of the human (2006:149). Shephard references Hillel Schwartz's attempt to describe the new kinaesthetic of the 20th century indicating that "this new kinaesthetic has to do with the experience not so much of the alienated mechanisation of the body but instead of the body as something that can be extended beyond 'natural' limits" (Shephard, 2006:145). My body transposed the heightened physicality used in mask performance to form a new body, one that in relation to the text, had the ability to expand and contract the audience's relationship to space.

However, the objects used in the performance did not carry or hold their intended meaning. Five platforms were used to represent the five pillars of Islam, but this did not translate in the audience's imaging consciousness because the 'sens' of the absent body was not considered and therefore the relationship between the performer and the platforms did not correspond with the intended relationship between the character and the five pillars of Islam. The analogon was unclear which resulted in the audience's inability to contextualise the absent body of the five pillars of Islam within their knowledge of the world – a knowledge that was there had I accessed it. Therefore, the platforms served no purpose apart from as levels for the performer to differentiate character. The platforms read as functional and not as analogons.

Therefore, I propose that a pedagogy comprised of Sartre's theories of the imaging consciousness, the functioning analogon and mask technique explored through

⁶ The mingling of body and non-body.

improvisation and play, will develop the performer's body, language, and their engagement with the relationship between body and non-bodies in performance. Furthermore, the performer's understanding and embodiment of all three components through transposition will influence their ability to generate and embody metaphorical imagery, develop their understanding in rhythmically reorganizing images in order to evoke emotion, meaning and complexity (both in the real and in fantasy worlds), while engaging with the imaginary (which I refer to as story) in the audience's imaging consciousness.

Masks and the *Analogon*: A Methodological Practice Towards Developing Story

Moving forward, I intend to use Sartre's 'imaging consciousness' and the 'analogon' as a working methodology towards generating metaphorical imagery which lends itself towards the imaginary in the audience's imaging consciousness. My aim is to create a production using both body/mask combinations (in the form of full character masks and larval masks) and body/object combinations in order to generate real and fantasy images that are emotionally driven in order for the story of the intended production to emerge within the imaginary. But in order for the analogons to be established, their absent bodies would first need to be identified. Therefore, the concept of the production needs to be predetermined followed by adequate independent research and group discussions which will provide the information necessary to underpin the performer's choices when physicalizing the 'sens' of the absent bodies as well as to inform the relationships between the chosen analogons. As mask performance demands the observer within the rehearsal process, I will adopt the role of observer/theatre-maker and use student-performers in both the development and performance of the production.

I propose a process of making grounded in improvisational play and the 'via negativa'. The rehearsal process will be divided into five major components: (1) Preparing the body for mask using the elements – air, fire, water, earth – and then progressing to animals, matter, objects and colours as impulses for transformation; (2) Developing the body/mask combination through mask technique using exercises derived from Lecoq, Eldredge, Wilsher and Wright in order to define the characters' identities, their characteristics and modes of communication through the use of gestural lines, establishing the countermask, exploring the use of tension and energy as tools towards developing relationship between new emerging bodies, as well as speed and rhythm of movement in order to deduce status, intent, character and points of concentration; (3) Developing *analogons* (body/object combinations) of the characters' world (the scenography) by establishing their index of identity, pulling their abstraction and developing their 'sens' through motion; (4) Transposition through improvisation and play in order to establish the function and language of these new bodies; and (5) Developing relationships between these new found bodies to form images (both real and fantastical). This process should result in a collection of metaphorical images that, when rhythmically patterned together, will create a layering of imagery, rooted in emotion, which allows for story to take shape in the audience's imaging consciousness.

Conclusion

Through the findings of my praxis, I have established that Jean-Paul Sartre's theories of the 'analogon' and the 'imaging consciousness' are useful tools/frames with/through which to understand the relationship between body and object in mask performance. The idea of the analogon allows for the body to be extended through, or invested into, objects to make new

bodies (Shephard 2006: 150). In addition, by abstracting the characteristics of the analogon, particularly the index of identity, abstract bodies of thought are invested into abstract objects to form fictional bodies that have the ability to pull the audience's consciousness towards the realm of fantasy but without negating the real. The new bodies can possess multiple functions, when in relation to one another, one of which is to create metaphorical imagery. The patterning of these metaphorical images positions the audience's imaging consciousness between the real and the fantastical – a space that I suggest is the imaginary. Furthermore, the combination of the imaging consciousness, the analogon and mask technique through improvisational play, *via negativa* and transposition creates the foundation of a possible working methodology that has the ability to develop the physical body as a mode of communication that advances the relationship between bodies and non-bodies in mask performance as a means of generating metaphorical images in order to make the imaginary world, which I refer to as story, come alive in the audience's imaging consciousness. It is with this understanding that I will create a final production using both body/mask combinations (both full character masks and larval masks) and body/object combinations (within the scenography) in my application of this methodology. By using this working frame, I aim to create a process that develops the performer's body, and their consideration of the relationship between body and non-bodies in performance. Additionally, to influence their ability to generate and embody metaphorical imagery, and to develop their understanding in rhythmically reorganizing images in order to evoke emotion, meaning and complexity (both in the real and in fantasy worlds). I intend for this methodology to not only produce a production that is rich in imagery, metaphor and emotion that actively engages the audience's imaging consciousness but also allows for a way of working for both theatre-makers and performers in image-making.

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